

investment and know-how through partnerships such as joint ventures and licensing arrangements in the region. European companies have established joint ventures or have purchased shares in privatized firms. Canadian entrepreneurs would be wise to obtain a strong foothold in the CEFTA markets, as competition, mainly from Austria, Germany, and Italy, will continue to increase. Moreover, the proximity of Hungary to war-torn Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia means additional marketing opportunities for Canadian companies, as those countries address their reconstruction needs.

Canadians will need to ascertain in advance that they can be competitive with EU suppliers, who often enjoy lower tariff barriers in the CEFTA region.

Major Companies

Among the firms active in the region are: ABB, Siemens, Jean Lefebvre, Lafarge Coppée, Heidelberger Zement, and Knauf.

Objectives

- to promote awareness of the value and advantages of wood-frame houses, specifically in the Czech Republic and Poland;
- to monitor the development of mortgage financing and other financial issues in the region which will lead to an increase in home construction; and

- to facilitate match-making between Canadian and regional companies for housing development projects.

Activities

- International Construction Show is held in Poznan in January. As well, there are six other trade fairs of importance in Poland.
- CONSTRUMA will be held in Hungary from April 15-19, 1997.
- CONECO is held in Bratislava, Slovakia, in May.
- FOR ARCHITECTURE is an annual fair held each September in Prague, for products, materials, hardware and software, construction machinery, and housing.
- FOR HABITAT is an annual show held each May in Prague.
- BUDMA is an international construction material fair, held in January, in Poznan.
- International Construction Fair is held in Brno in June.
- A Czech Housing Mission to Canada took place October 19-31, 1996.

ENVIRONMENTAL EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

Overview